





JOHN A. SEAVERNS









Vincent Brooks, Lith.

FRONTISPICE  
DAME PERKINS ABOVE THE GATE.



DAME PERKINS

AND HER GREY MARE;

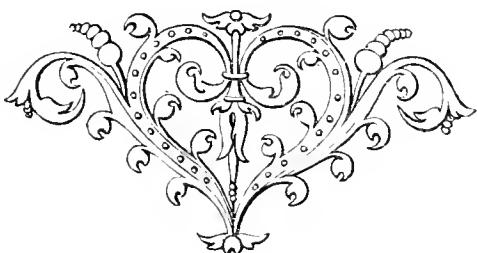
OR,

THE MOUNT FOR MARKET.

BY LINDON MEADOWS.



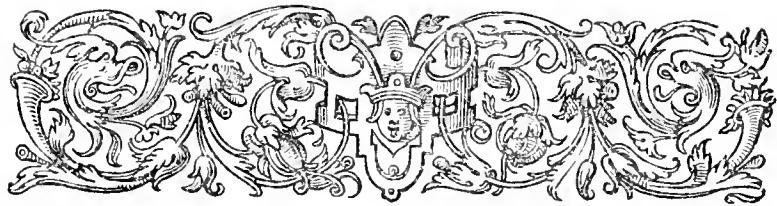
WITH COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS BY PHIZ.



LONDON:  
SAMPSON LOW, SON, AND MARSTON,  
MILTON HOUSE, LUDGATE HILL.

1866.





TO

### MY LITTLE DAUGHTER.

**H**AIL, Gertrude of the merry glance  
And cherry-tinted cheek!

No blind-mans-buff for us to-night,  
Or games at hide-and-seek;

A truce to battledore, and ball,  
We'll stow our bricks away,  
And keep our dolls and dominoes  
Until another day.

Dedication.

The timber horse may take his ease,  
The waggon scotch its wheel,  
And humming-top decline for once  
To dance a drowsy reel.

We'll cram the soldiers in the box,  
And squeeze the lid down tight,  
And if they hap to disagree,  
They'll have no room to fight.

We'll let the painted ninepins lie  
Just where we knocked them down,  
The silly king among the rest,  
With only half a crown.

To my Little Daughter.

“A time to mourn, a time to dance,”  
A time for ev’rything ;  
And why not too, my little maid,  
A time to laugh and sing ?

And mine shall be the song to-night,  
And yours the mirth and glee,  
And here we’ll sit and tell the tale,  
Beneath our Christmas-tree.

’Tis no fictitious fairy lay,  
Nor legendary strain,  
What now I sing has happened once,  
And might do so again.

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*Dedication.*

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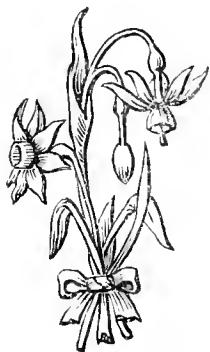
So let's equip our Pegasus,  
And let's invoke our Muse,  
And her who nursed me when a boy  
Our heroine we'll choose.

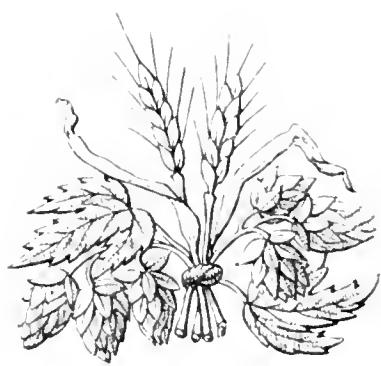
All raven once the ringlet waved  
Around her sunny brow,  
But few and silvered are the locks  
That grace those temples now.

Ours be the task to celebrate  
And to extol her fame,  
That youths and maidens yet unborn  
May hear Dame Perkins' name.

*To my Little Daughter.*

Then thus, like that young prince and maid  
Of whom we talked last night,  
We mount our barb, and turn the peg,  
And thus we take our flight :—





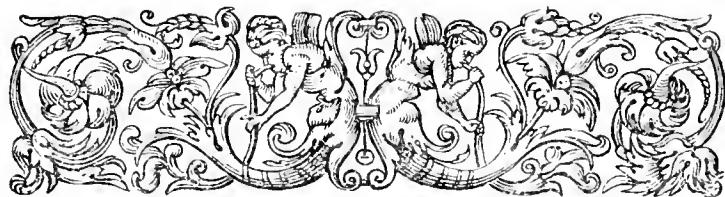


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## DAME PERKINS.



UOTH Farmer Perkins to Dame Meg,

“ The morn is bright and fair,

’Twould be a treat to you, old dame,

And to the old grey mare,

“ To trot as far as Worcester town,

For this is market day,

And take your butter, cheese, and eggs,

All with you on the way ;

The Staid Qualities of the Grey Mare.

“The old grey mare is staid enough,  
She’s lame and nearly blind,  
She’ll take you there in time, old dame,  
To leave your wares behind.

“We’ll put the saddle on, my love,  
We’ll girth her tight about,  
We’ll get the eggs and butter packed,  
And then we’ll set you out.”

Dame Perkins smiled upon her lord,  
As thus he gaily spoke,  
And ran to fetch her riding gear,  
And don her scarlet cloak.

Dame Perkins doubts if the Grey Mare will go.

The old grey mare was trotted out,  
And rubbed adown with straw,  
As grim and gaunt an old grey mare  
As bumpkin ever saw.

“ She'll need, Dame Meg,” old Perkins said,  
“ She'll need the whip and spur.”  
“ In truth she will,” cried old Dame Meg,  
“ For scarce a foot she'll stir.”

This comment on the bony steed  
I'm loath to sing was true,  
Her step was feeble and infirm,  
Her knees were broken too.

*The High Condition of the Grey Mare.*

Her mane and tail, once sleek and long,  
Were destitute of hair,  
And where two eyes had once been seen,  
But only one was there.

The one eye, too, looked wondrous dim,  
And 'twould be hard to say,  
Could this afflicted orb, alas !  
Distinguish night from day.

Her flesh so meagre was that one  
With ease each rib might count-  
But, reader, come and see the mare,  
And see Dame Perkins mount.

\*-----\*

*Dame Perkins takes her Seat.*

\*-----\*

The ancient steed in wonderment  
Snuffed up the morning gale,  
And winked one eye and wagged the stump  
Of what she called a tail.

I ill can guess what wicked thought  
Was passing through her mind,  
When basket stout was placed before,  
And Perkins placed behind.

From off the moss-green mounting stone  
She lightly took her seat,—  
“ Farewell,” she cried to Farmer John,  
“ To-night again we meet!”

\* \* \*

*Dame Perkins sets out in Good Spirits.*

\* \* \*

Away the steed, by grinning Joe,  
(A boy with yellow head),  
Through foldyard, and through orchard gate,  
And rutty lane was led.

Old Farmer Perkins stood and watched,  
And waved a kind adieu,  
And stretched his neck till by a turn  
His spouse was hid from view.

“ Let go her head,” Dame Perkins said,  
Aside to trusty Joe,  
“ I am a valiant horsewoman,  
And blithely we shall go.”

*The Grey Mare's Peculiarities.*

Away went Joe, in merry mood,  
Back to his pigs and straw,  
To wait upon old Farmer John,  
Whose word and will were law.

Now left alone, the mare displayed  
A most unpleasant knack  
Of walking sideways, like a crab,  
And turning shortly back.

And many other tricks she played,  
Among the worst of which  
Was dancing hornpipes on the road,  
And sometimes in the ditch.

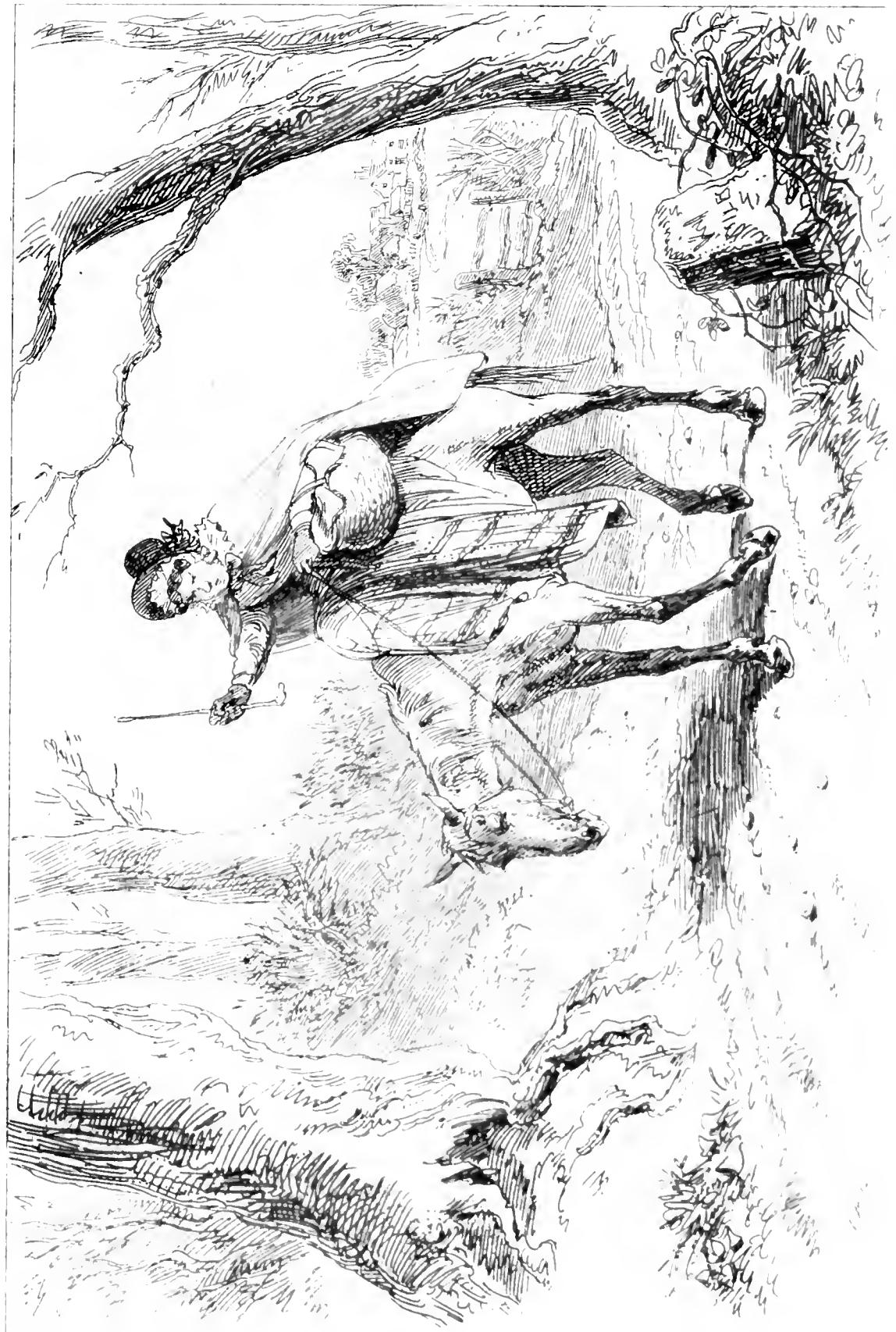
Dame Perkins remonstrates.

In vain Dame Perkins plied the stick,  
In vain she pulled the rein,  
The old grey mare twice shook her head  
And trotted back again.

“Beshrew the beast!” Dame Perkins said,  
“How Farmer John will stare  
To see me coming back so soon  
Upon his old grey mare!”

As though of this opinion, too,  
The wayward steed turned round,  
And with a slow and stately step  
Remeasured o'er the ground.





Vincent Brooks, Lith

W. A. M. & CO. PRINTERS TO THE S.S.N.H.P. (Page 19)

*Dame Perkins breathes a Benison on Farmer John.*

But as the day was rather warm,  
And as the hills were steep,  
In private she made up her mind  
To jog on in her sleep.

“ Plague take thee, Sal!” Dame Perkins said,  
“ If at this stumbling gait  
A dozen miles I am to ride,  
I’ll get to Worcester late.

“ Small thanks to him who set me out  
On such a sorry jade”—  
And o’er the shoulders of the mare  
Her tough oak-stick she laid.

---

*The Grey Mare Incorrigible.*

---

She gave her two smart thumps at first,  
Then dealt them in a shower ;  
It was a sad and solemn pace  
A mile in half an hour !

“ Foul fall thee, brute,” Dame Perkins said,  
“ A quicker step thou’dst find,  
Thou’dst mend thy pace, I warrant thee,  
Were Farmer John behind !”

But neither gentle words nor blows  
Would move the sluggish mare,  
Nor did she seem to heed the one,  
Nor for the other care.





11.5 MARK MAVIS TOOK A WALK AROUND GR HOUNDS.

(page.21)

*The Grey Mare pricks up her Ears.*

Her neck hung low and listless down  
Between her lazy legs,  
And every stumble that she made  
Smashed half-a-dozen eggs.  
  
At length, as from an ugly dream,  
She woke with sudden snort,  
Pricked up her ears, and shook her head,  
Then all at once stopped short.  
  
“ What ails thee, fool ? ” Dame Perkins said,  
With choler-kindling eye --  
Hark ! Hark ! what means that merry blast,  
Flung up from earth to sky ?

*The Basket of Eggs in danger.*

Again 'tis borne down on the breeze,

Again it melts in air—

Ah, woe betide Dame Perkins' eggs,

And woe betide the mare !

Yohoicks ! Hark-forward ! Tally-ho !

The woods ring with the sound,

The bending branches crash and fly,

And coursers spurn the ground.

Fast, fast they come, o'er hill and dale,

With Renard in full view :

On speeds the fox, on speed the hounds,

On speed the huntsmen too.

The Playful Humour of the Grey Mare.

Dame Perkins' mare, perhaps to look  
Magnificent and grand,  
With nostril snuffing up the air,  
On hindmost legs did stand.

“ Gramercy, Sal,” Dame Perkins said,  
Whose heart began to beat,  
“ Unless thou lett'st those forelegs down  
I cannot hold my seat !”

The mare, whose spirits were agog,  
A quick resource did find,  
Down went the rebel foremost legs,  
And up went those behind !

\*-----\*  
*Dame Perkins joins the Hunt.*  
-----\*

On came the hounds and huntsmen all,  
And shrill the blast they blew—  
With red cloak streaming out behind,  
Away Dame Perkins flew !

The old grey mare, in younger days,  
(Now steady and sedate),  
Had once been hunter as renowned  
As ever cleared a gate ;

And though the spark of former fire  
Faint flickered now, and tame,  
It needed but a gentle breeze  
To fan it into flame.



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HARK FORWARD!  
Page 24)



*The Grey Mare in her Glory.*

Wild grew her glance, her lonely eye  
    Flashed with no common light ;  
To see her vigour thus restored  
    It was a charming sight !

Her tail, or what was once a tail,  
    Wagged up and down apace ;  
A fleeter foot, more arching neck,  
    Ne'er followed in the chase.

On came the huntsmen sweeping past,  
    A gay and goodly train ;  
Ne'er such a gallant band, I ween,  
    Chased Renard o'er the plain.

\* \* \*

*Dame Perkins envies her former Sober Pace.*

---

Five hundred hoofs tore up the turf,  
On rushed the scarlet stream,  
And fearfully the old grey mare  
Began to skip and scream.

As eager as Dame Perkins was  
Before to make her go,  
As eager was Dame Perkins now  
To jog on grave and slow.

Off galloped horse, off scampered hound,  
Off galloped whipper-in—  
It took Dame Perkins' breath away,  
The shout, and tramp, and din.

Dame Perkins repents leaving Home.

How huntsmen laughed to see the dame  
Upon her charger fleet!  
And well they yoicked and tally-hoed  
To find she kept her seat.

The mettled mare's best blood was up,  
The bit was white with foam—  
“ Alack! alack!” Dame Perkins cried,  
“ That ever I left home!”

Content not, like some looker on,  
To hold a second place,  
Away she flew o'er furrowed field,  
And foremost led the chase.

Dame Perkins risks her Neck.

A broken hurdle barred the way  
With brambles at the top—  
“ Gramercy, Sal,” Dame Perkins cried,  
“ Thy gallop now must stop !”

With one light bound she cleared the leap,  
Nor brushed it with her legs—  
Ah, woe betide the curds and cheese,  
And woe betide the eggs !

“ Thou art a valiant horsewoman,”  
The nearest huntsman cried ;  
“ Thou well deserv’st that scarlet cloak,  
If thus thou always ride.”



Vincent Brooks Lith.

5

THE FIRST JUMP

17.9.60.28



*The Grey Mare grows Jealous.*

Now it might be that Perkins' mare  
(O jealousy accursed!)  
Was not at all well-pleased to see  
Another getting first;

But as that huntsman cheerily  
Plied old Dame Meg with mirth,  
Up went the mare's two hindmost heels,  
And crack went saddle-girth!

Yohoicks! Hark-forward! Tally-ho!  
What splash is that ahead?—  
Splash after splash fast greets the ear  
Till forty have been said.

*The Hounds make for the River.*

Next moment burst upon their view  
A clear and open stream ;  
That is the splash of swimming hound,  
And this the river Teme.

A pleasant thing it was, I wis,  
To watch Dame Perkins' mare  
Fast speeding to the river side  
With tail erect in air ;

To hear the yelping of the hounds,  
Each steady on the scent,  
To see each eager huntsman there  
With neck and body bent.

*The Mare follows the Hounds.*

Dame Perkins eyed the smoking stream,  
And shouted all in vain ;  
One hand was clasped the basket round,  
One held the bridle rein.

The more she shouted, fleeter far  
The stubborn steed did run ;  
Her ears so flat were laid adown,  
Some would have said she'd none.

One desp'rate tug Dame Perkins gave,  
But only one again,  
So fierce and desp'rate was that tug  
It broke the bridle rein !

\* \* \*

*Dame Perkins and her Mare take to the Water.*

---

“Thou ill-starred brute,” Dame Perkins cried,  
And on the stream did stare,  
“I know thee full too well of old  
To think thou’dst venture there!”

She scarcely could believe her eyes,  
But ‘twas no idle dream,  
One moment she was on the bank,  
The next she stemmed the Teme!

A famous swimmer was the mare,  
How well she plied her legs—  
Ah, woe betide the curds and cheese,  
And woe betide the eggs!



Vincent Brooks Lith.

MONK'S BROOK  
(Page 50)



*The Grey Mare the first to land.*

The straggling hounds have struck the shore,  
The fox again's in view ;  
On dashed the eager huntsmen all,  
And shrill the blast they blew.

Strange too to sing, the first to land  
Was still the old grey hack,  
And there, the flower of farmers' wives,  
Sat Perkins on her back !

“ Ah, well-a-day !” the dame did say,  
“ Though safe myself I find,  
Ill luck betide such madcap ride,  
I've left my eggs behind !”

Renard's Run upon the Road.

The sun had mounted in the sky  
Since Renard first begun,  
And, fleet of foot, o'er hill and dale,  
Six weary miles he'd run;

Yet still, with unabated speed,  
He lightly swept the ground,  
And long with tempting brush defied  
Both huntsman, horse, and hound.

Away he led them through the wood,  
Through field and flood away,  
Until at length bold Renard leapt  
Upon the king's highway.

The Gallop for Martley Gate.

Next, over hedge and ditch, the pack  
Swift followed at his heels,  
Dame Perkins' mare among the rest,  
Mixed up with carriage wheels.

On, on they fly along the road,  
On flies Dame Perkins still,  
Until they see the turnpike gate  
Of Martley on the hill.

The bony mare was foremost yet,  
The turnpike gate was shut,  
The keeper (drowsy sentinel !)  
Sat dozing in his hut.

The Grey Mare evades the Toll.

Loud did Dame Perkins scream and bawl  
To make the tollman hear ;  
But though with lungs at fullest pitch,  
No tollman did appear.

It mattered little to the mare,  
She hadn't time to wait,  
With Perkins clinging to her neck  
She cleared the turnpike gate.

Out ran the sleepy turnpike man,  
As fast as he could go,—  
“ A witch ! a broomstick witch ! ” he cried ;  
“ Yohoicks ! sing tally-ho ! ”



Vincent Brooks Luh

THE TURNPIKE

(stage do.)



*The Fox heads Homeward.*

It was a droll round-country route  
By which the fox had come ;  
To go to Worcester Perkins meant,  
She now was nearly home !

How all the gaping Martley folk  
Did laugh and shout and stare,  
To see her coming back so soon  
Upon the old grey mare !

Again the hounds take to the field,  
With Perkins at their tail,  
But Renard's breath, good heretofore,  
Did now begin to fail.

*The Fox seeks Cover at Farmer John's.*

His trailing brush in jeopardy,  
He seeks the cover late,  
Dead beat, with lolling tongue, he sneaks  
Through farmer Perkins' gate.

Now hobnailed Joe and Farmer John,  
Not dreaming of alarm,  
Were singing blithely to themselves,  
All busy on the farm ;

But when they heard that thrilling blast,  
Away they both did bound—  
“ Now, by my troth,” cried Farmer John,  
“ I love that merry sound ;

*Dame Perkins returns from her Day's Hunting.*

“ I've loved it,” John cried cheerfully,

“ I've loved it since a boy”—

“ Belike,” observed red-headed Joe,

“ And, measter, so have oi!”

No sooner had these words been said

Than to the gate they hied,

And there 'twas first that Farmer John

His truant spouse espied.

Across the fields he saw her come,

With streaming girth and rein,

Along the orchard, over brook,

And up the rutty lane.

\* \* \*

*Dame Perkins is in at the Death.*

---

In came the fox unto the farm,  
Hound after hound rushed through,  
And next, o'er gate, came old grey mare,  
And old Dame Perkins too.

Then in dashed eager huntsmen all,  
And next came whipper-in ;  
To flog the hounds from off the fox  
He stoutly did begin.

The mare lay panting on the straw,  
Dame Perkins sat beside,  
Her cloak all rent and dripping wet,  
And checks with crimson dyed.

Dame Perkins laments her Lost Eggs.

The wond'ring John gazed on the dame,  
And then upon the mare,  
“ To Worcester 'twas you rode,” quoth he,  
“ Methought you had been there !

“ Now say, where hast thou left thy eggs,  
And where thy curds and cream ?”—  
“ Alack ! alack !” Dame Perkins cried,  
“ I left them in the Teme !”

Now Renard dead, a huntsman straight  
Did climb the old elm tree ;  
Upon a sturdy branch he sat,  
Where all could hear and see ;

*The Squire's merry Say.*

And with the fox and shining blade  
These pleasant words he spoke—  
He was a gallant gentleman,  
And one who loved his joke—

“ Squires, gentlemen, and hunters all,  
List now unto my say,  
I've followed fox, and followed hound,  
Full many a cheery day ;

“ But since a hound first followed fox,  
Or fox first led the chase,  
Ne'er such a noble run as this  
Did hill or hollow grace.





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THE DAME IS PRESENTED WITH THE BRUSH  
{ page 416}

*The Brush awarded to Dame Perkins.*

---

“ Regardful of my due, a pad  
Content am I to claim,  
And with all gallantry award  
The brush to Perkins’ dame !”

A moment more, and high in air  
Each hunting-cap was flung,  
You should have heard that lusty shout,  
And how the welkin rung !

The echo from the hills around  
Returned the wild halloo,  
And well, I ween, had you been there,  
You would have shouted too.

*Red-headed Joe's Pride in the Old Grey Mare.*

And now my song is well-nigh done,

My story nearly told :—

That gallant squire is living still,

Though feeble grown, and old.

You needs must guess how neighbours all

Did gape and grin and stare,

And also how red-headed Joe

Did prize the old grey mare.

And how she ever afterwards

Would neigh and whisk her tail,

And lay her ears, when bugle note

Was borne down on the gale.

*The Fame of the Grey Mare spreads.*

A day could scarcely pass away  
But some alighted there,  
To hear the wondrous tale rehearsed,  
And see the wondrous mare ;

To marvel at the pace she went,  
And at the leaps she took,  
By flood and field, o'er ditch and rail,  
And hedge, and bank, and brook.

Some may look wise, and shake their heads,  
And not believe at all  
That Perkins ever rode the mare,  
Or rode without a fall ;

*Farmer John and his Dame in their Old Age.*

Then let them shake their noddles off,  
Look wise and wise again,  
I doubt, did they their wisest look,  
'Twould be but foolish then.

Old Farmer John is living yet,  
At least they tell me so,  
Dame Perkins too, as hath been sung,  
And so's red-headed Joe.

But year by year his locks have thinned,  
Like yellow leaves that fall,  
Until where once he wore red hair  
He now wears none at all.

*The Brush hung up as an Heirloom.*

The mare was found one windy night  
With eye-ball glassed in death ;  
Some say she died for want of care,  
Some say for want of breath.

And lastly, high o'er chimney-piece,  
(And now my tale is done),  
There hangs, for you and all to see,  
The brush Dame Perkins won !





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